

# Reading Toolkit: Grade 3 Objective 2.A.6.f

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 6. Read critically to evaluate informational text

Objective f. Identify and explain words and other techniques that affect the reader's feelings

Assessment Limits:

Significant words and phrases that have an emotional appeal

Significant words and phrases that have an emotional appeal

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## Lesson Seeds

### Reading Grade 3 Objective 2.A.6.f

#### Activities

Place student in small groups and provide each group with a folder containing appropriate movie advertisements. Have students highlight words within the text that would make a reader wish to see the movie. Next each group should select one advertisement to share with the class. During the presentation they should identify words and phrases used by the advertiser and explain how those words appeal to people.

The teacher will model the reading of a short persuasive informational passage. During the modeling the teacher will point out words and phrases that have an emotional pull on the reader. Next, the teacher will place students in small groups and provide each group with a persuasive informational passage for which they will highlight words and phrases that appeal to a reader's emotions. Each group will then share their findings with the whole class identifying the words and explaining how they would affect a reader.

Prior to the activity, the teacher should introduce students to the persuasive techniques employed by authors: emotion-charged words, rhetorical questions, repetition, hyperbole, etc... Using that information, students will view multiple, appropriate television commercials and complete a chart like the one below.

Product	Technique/s Used	Effectiveness

Next, students should be placed in small groups where they can discuss the information on their charts. Each group should decide upon the most effective commercial and share their findings with the class detailing how well the technique matched the product and why the commercial was most effective. This activity should help students understand how persuasive techniques are used so that in the next stage, students can apply a modified procedure to print text.

Prior to the activity, the teacher should collect a variety of different informational passages like editorials, letter to the editor, magazine articles, etc... all of which should be appropriate and of interest to students. A search of the SIRS database will yield multiple articles from reliable sources. Place students with a partner or in small groups where students will read a sampling of articles and complete a chart like the one below.

Topic	Title of Article	Technique Used	Effectiveness

After the chart is complete, students should share their reactions to the techniques found in these sources and judge which techniques are most commonly used and why that might be so.

## Clarification

### Reading Grade 3 Indicator 2.A.6

To show proficiency of **critical evaluation of informational text**, a reader must form a number of judgments about a text. To begin this process a reader must preview the text and its features and combine that information with prior knowledge to set a purpose for reading. During and after reading, the evaluation of informational text requires a reader to **determine the content of the text, the role of text features, text elements that make that text a reliable source, the author's opinion, argument, or position, the effectiveness and purpose of the author's word choice, and the effectiveness of the author's style**. A full evaluation of an informational text requires attention to each of these elements.

To begin a critical evaluation of informational text, a reader must use prior knowledge and preview the text to establish a purpose for reading. Once a purpose is established, that is followed by a close reading of the text. Next, a reader must judge how well the text provides information for the stated purpose for reading. Then a critical reader should be able to verbalize or scribe an explanation or analysis of the text by focusing on specific sections of that text and detailing how that **information meets or does not meet a stated purpose for reading**.

If that purpose is not met, a critical reader should be able to **identify those pieces of information that are needed to fully construct meaning**. Additional information may include more details within the text, more text features, or adjustments to the organizational pattern or existing text features. To determine what is required for meaning, a critical reader should closely read the existing text and then assess the degree to which the text meets a reader's purpose. A reader should note particularly the organizational pattern of the text and see how well that pattern helps a reader construct meanings from important ideas in the text. Those gaps in information that make it difficult for a reader to construct meaning signal the types of additional information that are needed.

The **analysis of informational text for reliability** is an important aspect in the text's critical evaluation. A reader must first discern how much of the text is factual. Once the factual information is isolated, judgments about its accuracy are necessary. A reader should access information about the author and his/her credentials as a means of assessing the passage's reliability. Depending upon the subject of the text and how current the information is also a reliability factor. When available, a reader can access other texts on the same subject to see if there is a consistency in the information. Finally after looking at multiple texts on the same subject, a reader can determine if the initial text contains the same information as the subsequent texts or if the initial text presents information not contained in the others. A discrepancy in information could point to an inaccuracy in a text or to a more current source of information.

Once reliability has been established, a reader should carefully note elements of text that address the **author's argument or produce clarity of the author's position on the topic**. Additionally, a reader should be attuned to **elements of bias** in the author's presentation of material. After reading is complete, a reader must implicitly understand the stated or implied main idea of the text. From that basis of understanding, a reader should look at the construction of the author's argument, noting any evidence of bias in the argument and looking for a fair treatment of opposing views on the topic. At that juncture a reader should be able to judge the impartiality of the material or the inclination of the author to present a single view of the topic. Based on that text evidence, a reader can make a critical decision about the text's fullness or limits of use to him/herself.

After a reader knows how useful a text might be, a determination can be made about what **additional information could help a reader construct meaning from the text**. Active reading skills will allow a reader to note a stated or implied main idea in the text. Then a reader can identify additional information that would add to, clarify, or strengthen their understanding of the text or the author's viewpoint. A reader's suggestions for additional information could include, but not be limited to

- Text features such as bulleted lists, captions, graphics, italicized or bold print etc.
- Information to address readers' questions that were not answered in the text
- Context clues, footnotes, or glossed words to help a reader understand unfamiliar words and phrases

A critical evaluation of a text also demands that a reader detect **words that authors use to affect a reader's feelings**. A critical reader can determine a reason for the author's word choice and the response the author wished to evoke. At the center of any persuasive text is a strong opinion, and authors use words to their advantage to create a strong emotional appeal to a reader. Repetition, rhetorical questions, hyperbole etc...all have the power to sway a reader's perceptions. A critical reader is aware of the power of words and examines this word choice to discern the author's tone. For example, a critical reader should be able to discern the difference in tone between "The hero was brave as he flew into the battle alone." from "The pilot was foolhardy flying into battle without cover." A critical reader must also note the portion of text where repetitions occur and determine why an author would wish to draw attention to that portion of text. Critical readers are aware of these elements and should be able to determine if they enhance an author's viewpoint. Finally critical readers should isolate elements that are used purely for emotional appeal and are not supported by fact.

Ultimately a critical reader should be able to **analyze an author's style** which is how an author uses language to relay ideas. An author's particular style has a direct effect upon the meaning of a text. For example, authors may use formal language to convey the seriousness of material or informal language to address the entertainment value of a topic. Or an author may use an informal style with a serious topic to evoke a particular response and cause a critical reader to consider why an author would not match style to topic. That disconnect between style and topic has a critical effect upon construction of meaning. A critical reader should also note how the author forms and uses sentences. The constant use of long, involved sentences or short, choppy sentences or a combination of both can alert a reader to a variety of emphases within a text. An author might use this stylistic formula to draw attention to a particular idea or to diminish the effect of an idea. Using sentence fragments is another way authors can achieve those same effects. Finally a critical reader should be aware that how the author uses language, makes choices about words, and constructs sentences that are planned so that a critical reader can develop insight into the author's intended meaning of a text.

## Sample Item #1 Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Item with Annotated Student Responses

### Question

Read the article about toys from the past 'Schoolyard Toys'. Then answer the following.

Explain whether or not the words in this article makes these toys sound like toys you would like to play with. In your response, use information from the article that supports your explanation. Write your answer on your answer document.

### Annotated Student Responses

In this story the words  
does not sound like  
the toy I would  
play with because  
back then they  
dint have good toy  
tittles

Annotation: The student responds that "words does not sound like the toy I would play with because back then they dint have good toy tittles." The student does answer the question and offers a reason for the response but does not reference the text. To improve this response, the student should select a specific toy and explain why the name for the toy and its description do not engender any enthusiasm for play. The student could extend the response by suggesting a more exciting name for the toy to show how that would be more appealing.

This article is not persuasive  
 and I would not like to  
 play with these toys. Because  
 most of these toys tell  
 us that we have to sit on the  
 floors and roll them. Or  
 spin them. So what is so  
 fun about sitting on the floor.

Annotation: The student answers that the passage "is not persuasive and I would not like to play with these toys" and continues that playing with these toys requires "sit on the floors and roll them. Or spin them." The student concludes with an inquiry "what is so fun about sitting on the floor." The student does answer the question and minimally references the text with information about how these toys are played with stating a conclusion about the limits of these toys. To improve this response, the student should state specifically which toy or toys he/she is referencing. Next, text support should be more direct giving information about the actual play with the selected toys. Finally the student should expand the conclusion telling why "sit on the floors" would make these toys unappealing.

The words did not make me want to play with these toys. The words did not make me want to play with these toys because it had no exciting words in it at all. Lets say I seen a hoop but it looked boring. It had no decription in it. If they said the big blue hoop with white poke'a dots its exciting.

Annotation: The student answers that "words did not make me want to play with these toys...because it had no exciting words in it at all." Next, the student gives an example of "a hoop" that is "boring" with "no decription in it." The student concludes that adding description "big blue hoop with white poke 'a' dots its exciting." The student does answer the question, minimally references the text, and completes the response with a suggestion about exciting words to describe the hoop. To improve this response, the student needs to reference the text giving information about the hoop. Next the student should explain why the information is boring and then explain why the suggested description is exciting.

## Handouts

### Schoolyard Toys

At school, children were allowed to play during recess and lunchtime. Many brought toys to school so they could share them with their friends. Hoops, marbles, jacks, and tops were all favorite schoolyard toys.

#### Marbles

Marbles were made of stone, pottery, clay or china. Some had colorful swirls or strange designs. Children who had no marbles used musketballs, nuts, or hard berries to play instead.

Marble collections were always changing, as children won, lost, and traded their marbles. A big bag of marbles was considered a treasure. Losing at marbles was very disappointing. Perhaps the expression "lost their marbles" began as a description of an angry loser.

#### Jacks

The game of jacks was played with small, six-pronged objects called jackstones, or jacks. The first player started the game by throwing the jackstones on the ground. The other players then took turns tossing one jack into the air, picking up another jack from the ground, and then catching the flying jack as it came back down—all with the same hand!

In the next rounds, players tried to grab two jacks, then three, then four. If someone failed to pick up enough jacks, or allowed the flying jack to hit the ground, that person was out of the game. In the late 1800's, players bounced a rubber ball instead of throwing a jack in the air.

#### Tops

Tops were favorite toys with both boys and girls. They came in many different styles. Some were wound up with a string. Others had a long, round stem for spinning. Peg tops were the most common kind of top. They were made of a single carved piece of wood. A humming top was hollow and had a hole in one side. When it spun, it made a whistling or humming noise.

Conqueror was an exciting game. Two players spun their tops so that the tops bounced against each other. The top that knocked the other over while staying upright itself, was the winner. In other games, competitors tried to spin a top on a target or see whose top could spin the longest.

#### Hoops

A wooden or metal hoop could provide hours of fun. Boys and girls raced their hoops across the schoolyard. In order to keep the hoops upright, children guided them with a stick. Contests were held to test hoop-rolling skills. Sometimes participants had to guide their hoops through obstacle courses. In other contests, children tried to keep several hoops rolling at once.



## Rubric - Brief Constructed Response (BCR)

### Score 3

The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.

- Addresses the demands of the question
- Effectively uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to clarify or extend understanding

### Score 2

The response demonstrates a general understanding of the text.

- Partially addresses the demands of the question
- Uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to show understanding

### Score 1

The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text.

- Minimally addresses the demands of the question
- Uses minimal information to show some understanding of the text in relation to the question

### Score 0

The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the question, or missing.<sup>2</sup>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Text-relevant: This information may or may not be an exact copy (quote) of the text but is clearly related to the text and often shows an analysis and/or interpretation of important ideas. Students may incorporate information to show connections to relevant prior experience as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> An exact copy (quote) or paraphrase of the question that provides no new relevant information will receive a score of "0".

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